

# SPS/Army Assert Presence at Major DOD E-Business Conference

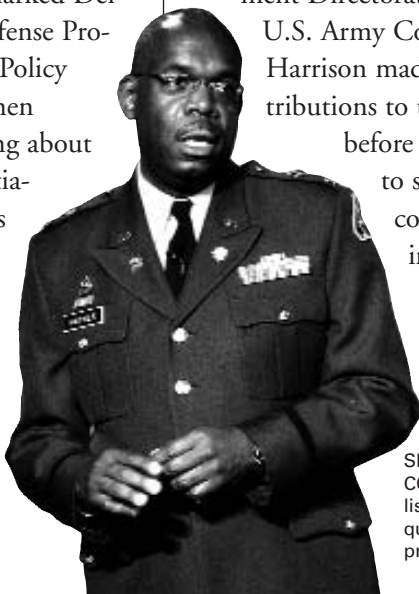
Kristen Noel

**T**ransformation was the focus of the E-Business/SPS Joint Users' Conference Nov. 15-19, 2004, Houston, TX, and the spotlight was on the Standard Procurement System (SPS). This large DOD electronic business conference brought together more than 800 acquisition professionals from across the military services and several DOD agencies. SPS will become the standard contract writing system for all of DOD and is currently used by 13 Army contracting commands. The system is also deployed in the Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and 13 other defense agencies, totaling more than 22,000 users.

Deidre A. Lee, Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy, leads the crowd in a round of applause during her keynote speech at the E-Business/SPS Joint User's Conference.

SPS is the only departmentwide business system recognized by DOD to date, and leads the charge for DOD's transformation to more streamlined, efficient processes within its acquisition landscape.

"I'm very proud of the SPS folks — they are the pioneers," remarked Deidre A. Lee, Director of Defense Procurement and Acquisition Policy (DPAP). "They step up when everybody else is still talking about how to accomplish the initiatives set under the Business Management Modernization Program. The rest of the procurement world is now saying, 'SPS is practical. When we include it in our business arrangements, we get a boost in performance.'"



The Army hosted breakout sessions on eight subjects at the conference and represented half of the attendees, according to conference officials. "People have a lot of questions, and you need a large turnout to tackle them," said COL Theodore Harrison, then Director, Business Systems Management Directorate, Headquarters, U.S. Army Contracting Agency. Harrison made substantial contributions to the SPS Program before being reassigned to support critical contracting activities in Iraq.

The Army also stood out during the showcasing

SPS Program Manager COL Jacob Haynes listens to a user's question during his program overview.

of the Battle Ready Contingency Contracting System (BRCCS), another key topic at the E-Business/SPS Joint Users' Conference. BRCCS is a mobile version of SPS created for contracting on the front lines, where information technology infrastructure can be limited or unavailable.

Currently, BRCCS is used solely by U.S. Army contingency contracting officers and has proven effective in supporting humanitarian missions around the globe. COL Victoria Diego-Allard, Commander, U.S. Army Contracting Command, Europe, explained that, "Until 2002, we still had manual Excel spreadsheets to capture our transactions in the field. We had to hand enter the data back at the base, and some transactions never made it out of the filing cabinets," she stated. "But we used BRCCS for a total of 48 deployments in FY04."



Director Deidre A. Lee (second from left) and DPAP Deputy Director, Electronic Business Mark Krzysko (far right) with U.S. Army contingency contracting officers in front of the BRCCS display. The BRCCS display was an eye-catcher in the exhibit area with screen shots of the software and rugged computers.

The conference offered more than 50 breakout sessions under nine learning tracks, two of which were hosted by the Army. Attendees used these sessions to explore specific elements of SPS and other related acquisition systems. Conference highlights included:

- **Federal Procurement Data System-Next Generation (FPDS-NG).** SPS will be the first DOD system to interface with this project, which is mandated by the *President's Management Agenda*, promulgated through the Office of Management

and Budget. "That's great news for SPS users, who need only hit a button and create an action report that dumps directly into FPDS-NG," explained Lisa Romne, Procurement Analyst, DPAP, EB Office, which reports to Michael W.

Wynne, Acting Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics.

Currently, BRCCS is used solely by U.S. Army contingency contracting officers and has proven effective in supporting humanitarian missions around the globe.

People stop by our booth for a demonstration and respond, "That's it?" Yep!" Romney continued. "In the near future there will be no more DD350 [*Individual Contracting Action Reports*], no more DD1057 [*Monthly Summaries of Contracting Actions*] and no more summary reporting. This is real, on-the-ground change, and contracting officers are the smartest and most dynamic people, so they can handle it," she concluded.

The full deployment schedule for the FPDS-NG machine-to-machine interface is being defined. Several items still need to be addressed by the General Services Administration, the program manager for FPDS-NG, before an efficient DOD rollout can begin. Users can find the latest information from their Component FPDS-NG Migration Team representative.

- **Wide Area Work Flow (WAWF).** "WAWF takes DOD's invoicing, receipt and acceptance system off paper and onto the Web," said Elizabeth Wilkinson, WAWF Program Manager. "The 21,748 active vendors involved support WAWF because it allows them to submit invoices through three paths. Likewise, 72,537 active users among the military services see this tool reducing

their interest penalties by increasing timely payments," she continued. "They're also taking full advantage of the vendor discounts via this route, and decreasing document error."

- **Army Contracting Business Intelligence System (ACBIS).** Attendees at the breakout session for this Web-based business intelligence system enjoyed the depth of Armywide procurement information they can access by tapping into ACBIS' standard reports and ad hoc queries. Best of all, ACBIS uses extractors to update Procurement Desktop-Defense information every evening and load it into the system, so accuracy is the only requirement it expects from SPS users — a goal already on their radar screens.

"Our system is setting the tone and pace for the entire acquisition domain," noted COL Jacob Haynes, SPS Program Manager. "This conference isn't about educating senior leaders anymore. It's time to show how our users at the desktops have stepped up to the plate and continue to shine."

DPAP Deputy Director of Electronic Business Mark Krzysko, who co-hosted the conference with Haynes, agreed wholeheartedly. "Warfighters must be ready at every moment in case they need to move forward. The contracting community, too, must be dynamic and accountable," Krzysko concluded.

**KRISTEN NOEL** is an account executive for CorpComm, a woman-owned, small business specializing in government communications. She provides communications support to the SPS Joint Program Management Office and is the managing editor of the Program's award-winning newsletter, *The SPS Connection*. She has a B.A. in professional writing from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.



COL Victoria Diego-Allard, Commander of the U.S. Army Contracting Command, Europe, traveled from Germany to Houston, TX, to share her command's success using BRCCS.